

## **SECTION THREE:**

# **Trending Quality Of Life And City-Related Initiatives**

The final section of the report focused on two primary themes, both of which were incorporated in previous surveys. One broached the concept of quality of life by using open-ended and statement association questioning methods to determine how respondents defined this particular issue, as well as how the city responded to this issue. The other theme sought to evaluate the performance of the current city council, specifically through a series of action statements and issue development questions.

The quality of life theme was addressed in the following manner. To introduce this portion of the survey, interviewers posed an open-ended question that asked respondents to describe the element they associated principally with the phrase "quality of life." Next, a list of features commonly associated with quality of life was read. Respondents were first prompted to rate the importance of each feature and then, how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with the city's performance of each feature. In a secondary quality evaluation, interviewers read a list of seven statements related to the city's governance policies and asked participants how strongly they agreed or disagreed with each. One other question queried residents as to how the people in the city value cultural diversity. This question was first posed in 2001.

The remaining pages focused the respondent on the issues of taxes, the city council and new items for the city to provide. An open-ended question was posed that asked respondents what service or facility they would like to see the city provide which it currently does not. Then residents were asked to rate their perceptions of the amount of taxes they paid to the school district, city and county. A continuing evaluation of the city council was addressed in this manner. First, respondents were asked to give the council a general job rating, and, secondly, a specific report card of satisfaction with the council's work on a list of basic activities. The final question reviewed asked Bryan residents to prioritize, from a listing of general issues, the most important one for the city to work on during the next year.

## QUALITY OF LIFE ELEMENTS

As in both previous surveys, the initial "quality of life" question was open-ended and attempted to better determine how people defined this concept without offering them any pre-determined responses. In order to ascertain how residents viewed the community from the perspective of "quality of life," it was necessary to understand what that phrase meant to them, rather than identifying possible answers for them. The question was introduced with the statement that people define "quality of life" in many ways. Interviewers continued, **"What element best describes quality of life to you?"** A total of 293 people offered a response, a total that was lower than both previous surveys (313 and 310). The comprehensive list of responses was organized into 11 general and miscellaneous categories. Safety/security (25%) was the primary element that best described quality of life, according to survey participants. Also important elements were nice community (16%) and family/people (12%).

Secondary elements that defined this theme were peace/quiet (9%), sufficient recreation (6%), religion/faith and good health (both 5%), and financial security (4%). The two final responses were good streets/traffic control and city services, each attaining 3% of the responses.

In comparing these results to previous surveys, the most important point is the continuing emphasis residents place on safety/security (27%-24%-25%). One element that appears to be gaining in prominence is nice community (9%-13%-16%). Also more important this year was peace/quiet (6%-3%-9%), although most of the gains for this item came from 2001 to 2004. And in successive years, less emphasis has been placed on religion/faith (11%-6%-5%) as a quality of life element.

Items touched on in previous surveys but not mentioned this year included happiness, education, country living, and community involvement. One new element was included and that was streets/traffic control.

Table #24 shows the cumulative results from each survey, prioritized in the order of mention from 2004. In addition the current subsector and gender results have been included:

**TABLE #24: ELEMENTS THAT DEFINE QUALITY OF LIFE BY SUBSECTOR AND GENDER**

SUGGESTION	OVERALL			DSTRCT 1	DSTRCT 2	DSTRCT 3	DSTRCT 4	DSTRCT 5	SEX OF RESPONDENT	
	1998	2001	2004						MALE	FEMALE
Safety/security	27%	24%	25%	30%	15%	24%	21%	35%	21%	28%
Nice community	9%	13%	16%	22%	9%	15%	17%	19%	20%	13%
Family/people	9%	9%	12%	17%	13%	13%	10%	70%	15%	8%
Miscellaneous	7%	7%	11%	20%	17%	4%	10%	9%	10%	12%
Peace/quiet	6%	3%	9%	3%	11%	10%	15%	4%	10%	9%
Sufficient recreation	4%	3%	6%	3%	11%	10%	15%	4%	10%	9%
Good health	7%	6%	5%	0%	11%	7%	5%	2%	2%	8%
Financial security	4%	9%	4%	3%	7%	6%	4%	4%	5%	4%
City services	NA	4%	3%	3%	2%	4%	2%	6%	5%	2%

Quality of life was different things to different people and some of those attitudes may have been influenced by geography. For example, safety/security appeared to be more important to residents in Districts 5 (35%) and 1 (30%). Secondary percentages were as low as 15% (District 2) and were no higher than 24% (District 3). People in District 2 also chose not to say nice community was an element (9%), compared to percentages of 22% in District 1 and 19% in District 5. Note that these two sections of the city, Districts 1 and 5, were most prominent when it came to the two top responses of safety/security and nice community. There was also a ten-point variance when it came to the elements of family/people (17% in District 1, to 7% in District 5), peace/quiet (15% in District 4, to 3% in District 1), religion/faith (10% in District 3, to 0% in District 1), and good health (11% in District 2, to 0% in District 1). Note that safety/security, even with its variance, was the top element throughout the city. And the second most mentioned item, except in District 2, was nice community. The third ranked item varied throughout.

Safety/security (28%-21%), religion/faith (8%-3%), and good health (8%-2%) were words more often used by women in defining quality of life. Men were more likely to say nice community (20%-13%) and family/people (15%-8%) in describing the top elements. Both groups similarly mentioned peace/quiet (10%-12%) and sufficient recreation (6%-6%). Although safety/security was the top response, we note that when compared to community improvement ratings, it was more likely to be mentioned by someone who rated the community as worse rather than improved (24%-25%-32%). Conversely, it was people more positive about the community who mentioned nice community (15%-22%-9%), sufficient recreation (8%-1%-0%), and, to a lesser extent, peace/quiet (11%-6%-9%).

How active one was in his or her community did not appear to influence how each described quality of life. There was minimal variance in the responses safety/security (24%-27%), peace/quiet (10%-7%), or sufficient recreation (6%-5%). Inactive respondents did more often use nice community (19%-15%) to describe quality of life, and active individuals, family/people (13%-9%), but the variances between the two were only four points. Active voters were more likely to list the element safety/security (26%-19%). Comparatively, those less likely to vote mentioned family/people (15%-11%) in describing quality of life.

When this question is compared to how residents rated the current city council, the response safety/security was listed similarly by both groups (26%-25%). However, nice community was more popular with people positive about the council (21%-12%), with family/people more often being the preferred choice of respondents more negative about the council (16%-10%). Safety/security (18%), nice community (15%), and peace/quiet (9%) were the primary responses of residents with no opinion as to council performance. Residents who rated the way the city was maintained as excellent were most likely to say safety/security (31%-23%-25%), peace/quiet (11%-9%-6%), and sufficient recreation (11%-6%-3%) were the way they described quality of life. A more negative perception toward city maintenance led respondents to say family/people (9%-11%-15%) and good health (4%-4%-8%) were how it was best described.

Nonparents were as likely to say nice community (25%) was the element as they were to say safety/security (26%). Parents did not feel that way, although not all felt that safety/security was the best manner in which to describe quality of life. Parents, as a group, tended to prioritize family/people as the key element. Safety/security was first to parents of children under 6 (30%-22%) and over 19 (20%-13%). However, for parents of children 6-12, family/people was a more frequent response (23%-21%). Among parents of teenagers, both responses were listed in identical terms (20%-20%). Although family/people captured significant interest from parents, it only generated 6% of the responses from nonparents. Parents regarded nice community as nonparents felt about family/people, mentioning it significantly less often (9%-12%-11%-7%). Peace/quiet also tended to be a response more often attributed to nonparents (12%, to 0%-7%-9%-7%).

The element of safety/security came from those newest and oldest to the community (31%-19%-25%). Nice community was not a comment oftentimes generated by long-term residents (23%-23%-14%), in contrast to family/people (8%-11%-13%) and peace/quiet (8%-2%-12%), each more frequent among more tenured inhabitants. Older survey participants were more hesitant to describe quality of life as nice community (22%-15%-14%) and family/people (16%-13%-8%), as both characterizations were more often attributable to younger respondents. This was not the case with peace/quiet (3%-10%-12%), a

term more often generated by older individuals. Note that safety/security was a response that fluctuated, more often mentioned by middle-aged respondents than anyone else (21%-29%-23%).

## **IMPORTANCE OF QUALITY OF LIFE ELEMENTS**

The second question related to quality of life was a follow-up on the open-ended query, except that this time the responses were provided. As in both previous surveys, a list of ten elements was presented, with interviewers asking participants, "***Please tell me how important or unimportant each is in determining the quality of life in your community.***" The items respondents were asked to comment on were the same as in 2001, when two additional items were added: providing a safe community, adequate community events, keeping citizens informed about city business, planning for future needs of residents, and maintaining a qualified workforce of city employees. The other five responses focused on providing an adequate forum for public input and providing public transportation, working with the school district, enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts, and encouraging cultural diversity among residents. Respondents were able to comment through the use of a four-point very important to very unimportant scale.

Table #25 presents the overall results from the three surveys, to better identify positive or negative trends:

**TABLE #25: COMPARISON OF OVERALL IMPORTANCE OF QUALITY OF LIFE ENHANCEMENTS -- 1998 -- 2004**

ACTIVITY	VERY IMPORTANT			IMPORTANT			UNIMPORTANT			VERY UNIMPORTANT			NO OPINION			RATIO
	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	
Providing a safe community	79%	78%	84%	20%	22%	15%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	99.0:1
Providing adequate community events	22%	19%	25%	68%	68%	63%	8%	11%	11%	1%	1%	0%	1%	2%	0%	8.0:1
Keeping citizens informed about city business	42%	40%	47%	56%	55%	49%	1%	3%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%	48.0:1
Planning for future needs of residents	45%	48%	58%	50%	49%	39%	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	3%	2%	2%	97.0:1
Maintaining a qualified workforce of city employees	36%	46%	52%	62%	51%	46%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	2%	2%	1%	49.0:1
Providing an adequate forum for public input	34%	39%	43%	62%	54%	52%	1%	3%	2%	0%	0%	0%	2%	4%	2%	47.5:1
Providing public transportation	22%	31%	35%	61%	54%	50%	14%	11%	12%	1%	0%	1%	2%	4%	3%	6.6:1
Working with the school district	48%	53%	58%	47%	39%	39%	3%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	6%	2%	97.1:1
Enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts	28%	26%	35%	61%	62%	56%	8%	9%	8%	2%	1%	0%	1%	3%	0%	11.4:1
Encouraging cultural diversity among residents	NA	34%	36%	NA	49%	49%	NA	12%	11%	NA	1%	1%	NA	5%	2%	7.1:1

Providing a safe community (99%-0%, 99.0:1), planning for future needs of residents (97%-1%, 97.0:1), and working with the school district (97%-1%, 97.0:1) were the statements shown by the ratio of important to unimportant attitudes to be most important in determining the quality of life of a community. Overall, seven of the ten statements attained overall importance ratings of 90% or better. In addition to the three were maintaining a qualified workforce of city employees (98%-2%, 49.0:1), keeping citizens informed about city business (96%-2%, 48.0:1), providing an adequate forum for public input (95%-2%, 47.5:1), and enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts (91%-8%, 11.4:1). The ratios for the three remaining items were all higher than six to one: 8.0:1 (88%-11% for providing adequate community events); 7.1:1 (85%-12% for encouraging cultural diversity among residents); and 6.6:1 (85%-13% for providing public transportation).

No element presented was rated unimportant by more than 13% of the sample. The most unimportant activities in determining quality of life were providing public transportation (13%), encouraging cultural diversity among residents (12%), and providing adequate community events (11%). And residents were very decided, as no opinion responses were no higher than the three percent who chose this response when questioned about providing public transportation.

Because all items were ranked important by so many, a better method of evaluating importance is to review the intensity, or passion of their response. For this exercise, the three items with the highest ratio were also the ones rated most important: providing a safe community (84%) and planning for the future needs of residents and working with the school district (both 58%). Ranking fourth through sixth in intensity were also the same three items: maintaining a qualified workforce of city employees (52%), keeping citizens informed about city business (47%), and providing an adequate forum for public input (43%). The bottom four statements were encouraging cultural diversity among residents (36%), providing public transportation and enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts (both 35%), and providing adequate community events (25%).

How one determines which elements help define quality of life has not changed significantly over the past six years, judging by the combined important and very important ratings of residents. For example, in comparing 1998 and 2004 ratings, no item varied by more than two percent, positively or negatively. In tracking 2001 and 2004 findings, two varied by more than two points, working with the school district improved five (92%-97%) and enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts increased three (88%-91%). In other words, each of these percentages fell within the standard margin of error, therefore being the same year in and year out.

However, although not scientific, there has been some movement when reviewing the intensity ratings. Elements that have generated minimum four percent higher very important percentages between the benchmark and current survey findings numbered eight, with five being gradual improvements: maintaining a qualified workforce (36%-46%-52%, +16), planning for future needs of residents (45%-48%-58%, +13), providing public transportation (22%-31%-35%, +13), working with the school district (48%-53%-58%, +10), providing an adequate forum for public input (34%-39%-43%, +9), enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts (28%-26%-35%, +7), providing a safe community (79%-78%-84%, +5), and keeping citizens informed about city business (42%-40%-47%, +5). The other two elements had minimal increases of 3% and 2%, respectively.

In comparing 1998 to 2004 ratios, we note several instances in which importance ratings have shifted, either negatively or positively. Most of these changes were

brought about by minor shifts in percentages, not dramatic changes. Services which had a higher ratio in 1998 were providing adequate community events (10.0:1-8.0:1), keeping citizens informed about city business (98.0:1-48.0:1), maintaining a qualified workforce of city employees (98.0:1-49.0:1), and providing an adequate forum for public input (96.0:1-47.5:1). Conversely, the ratio improved for planning for future needs of residents (47.5:1-97.0:1), providing public transportation (5.5:1-6.6:1), enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts (8.9:1-11.4:1), and encouraging cultural diversity among residents (6.4:1-7.1:1).

Table #26 compares the overall importance ratings of the three surveys by subsector, to track any changes evident in people's attitudes:

**TABLE #26: COMPARISON OF OVERALL IMPORTANCE OF QUALITY OF LIFE ENHANCEMENTS RATINGS BY SUBSECTOR -- 1998 -- 2004**

ACTIVITY	DISTRICT 1			DISTRICT 2			DISTRICT 3			DISTRICT 4			DISTRICT 5		
	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004
Providing a safe community	100%	98%	96%	94%	99%	100%	100%	90%	100%	99%	100%	99%	100%	99%	100%
Providing adequate community events	95%	87%	83%	86%	91%	93%	94%	84%	89%	90%	90%	85%	88%	84%	89%
Keeping citizens informed about city business	100%	92%	95%	97%	97%	97%	98%	94%	97%	99%	97%	94%	98%	96%	96%
Planning for future needs of residents	95%	95%	97%	94%	95%	96%	94%	95%	99%	97%	98%	96%	95%	99%	100%
Maintaining a qualified workforce of city employees	97%	95%	95%	96%	96%	99%	98%	99%	99%	98%	99%	97%	99%	99%	99%
Providing an adequate forum for public input	97%	95%	93%	100%	90%	96%	95%	92%	96%	97%	94%	97%	95%	93%	96%
Providing public transportation	85%	86%	94%	92%	93%	88%	86%	86%	82%	77%	79%	82%	82%	84%	80%
Working with the school district	92%	96%	98%	98%	90%	99%	95%	91%	98%	96%	90%	96%	92%	94%	95%
Enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts	87%	91%	94%	92%	93%	94%	92%	91%	86%	86%	83%	89%	86%	87%	93%
Encouraging cultural diversity among residents	NA	91%	89%	NA	85%	90%	NA	79%	80%	NA	81%	85%	NA	81%	82%

This year's survey results show that residents everywhere but in District 1 rank providing a safe community as the most important element in determining



quality of life in a community. The item of most importance to District 1 residents was working with the school district, followed by planning for the future needs of residents, and then providing a safe community. It should be noted that just two percentage points separated the first through third items in that part of the city. The second ranked element to people in Districts 3 and 5 was planning for the future needs of residents, compared to maintaining a qualified workforce of city employees to those in Districts 2 and 4. The third ranked item also differed. In Districts 3 and 5, it was the qualified workforce statement; in District 2 it was the school district element; while in District 4, it was about providing an adequate forum.

Many elements go into defining quality of life, as evidenced by the number of items which achieved an importance rate of 90% or better. Out of ten possible items, the 90% plateau was reached eight times in District 1, compared to nine in District 2, six in Districts 3 and 4, and seven in District 5. Variances were noted regarding providing adequate community events (93% in District 2, to 83% in District 1 providing public transportation (94% in District 1, to 82% in District 3), and encouraging cultural diversity among residents (90% in District 2, to 80% in District 3). And when the elements were ranked in terms of importance, variances of three positions were numerous, not only for providing a safe community, but also for several others. Those differences included providing adequate community events (7th in District 3, to 10th in District 1), planning for future needs of residents (2nd in Districts 2, 4, and 5, to 5th in District 1), providing an adequate forum for public input (3rd in District 4, to 8th in District 1), providing public transportation (6th in District 1, to 10th in Districts 2, 4, and 5), and working with the school district (1st in District 1, to 6th in District 5).

In terms of trending, four items in District 1 increased between 1998 and 2004 compared to three in District 4, 5 in District 3, 6 in District 5, and 7 in District 2. By comparison, declines totaled 2 in Districts 2 and 5, 3 in Districts 3 and 4, and 6 in District 1. Elements which appeared to increase in importance in at least three council districts were planning for future needs of residents (all but District 4), working with school district (all but District 4), and encouraging cultural diversity among residents (all but District 1). Conversely, declines were evident regarding providing adequate community events (all but Districts 2 and 5), keeping citizens informed about city business (all but District 2), and providing public transportation (all but Districts 1 and 4). It should be noted that these figures include any shift, not just movements of four percent or more.

When looking at shifts of over three percent, District 1 respondents rated as more important providing public transportation (85%-86%-94%), working with the school district (92%-96%-98%), and enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts (87%-91%-94%). Comparatively, they appeared to feel less about providing adequate community events (95%-87%-83%), keeping citizens informed about

city business (100%-92%-95%), and providing an adequate forum for public input (97%-95%-93%).

More items exhibited gains in District 2 than anywhere else in the city, although several increases were three percent or less. Those exceeding that percentage were providing a safe community (94%-99%-100%), providing adequate community events (86%-91%-93%), and encouraging cultural diversity among residents (NA-85%-90%). And only two declined: providing an adequate forum for public input (100%-90%-96%) and providing public transportation (92%-93%-88%).

District 3 considered planning for future needs of residents (94%-95%-99%) to be more important in determining quality of life, while assigning lower ratings to providing adequate community events (94%-84%-89%), and enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts (92%-91%-86%). All other gains and declines were by less than three percent. In District 4, importance increased for providing public transportation (77%-79%-82%) and encouraging cultural diversity among residents (NA-81%-85%). Conversely, items in which importance was diminished were providing adequate community events (90%-90%-85%) and keeping citizens informed about city business (99%-97%-94%). Two elements in District 5 increased by more than three percent, but none declined at that rate. Those two were planning for future needs of residents (95%-99%-100%) and enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts (86%-87%-93%).

Table #27 below compares importance and unimportance ratings based on community activity and voting activity:

**TABLE #27: IMPORTANCE OF QUALITY OF LIFE ENHANCEMENTS BY COMMUNITY ACTIVITY AND VOTING ACTIVITY**

ACTIVITY	COMMUNITY ACTIVITY				VOTING ACTIVITY			
	ACTIVE/INFORMED		ISSUES/LIVE HERE		ALWAYS/OFTEN		SELDOM/NEVER	
	IMPORT	UNIMP	IMPORT	UNIMP	IMPORT	UNIMP	IMPORT	UNIMP
Providing a safe community	99%	1%	99%	1%	100%	0%	99%	2%
Providing adequate community events	87%	12%	89%	11%	88%	12%	89%	10%
Keeping citizens informed about city business	96%	2%	96%	3%	97%	2%	95%	3%
Planning for future needs of residents	98%	1%	97%	1%	96%	1%	100%	0%
Maintaining a qualified workforce of city employees	97%	2%	99%	0%	97%	1%	99%	1%
Providing an adequate forum for public input	96%	2%	95%	3%	94%	2%	97%	3%
Providing public transportation	84%	13%	86%	12%	80%	16%	94%	4%
Working with the school district	97%	1%	97%	1%	97%	1%	99%	1%
Enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts	91%	8%	91%	9%	89%	9%	95%	5%
Encouraging cultural diversity among residents	86%	12%	83%	15%	83%	13%	90%	10%

The level of activity one displayed in his or her community did not impact how important or not a particular element was in determining quality of life. Overall, the variance between the two subsets for any statement did not exceed three percent. However, in terms of intensity, active community members were more attuned to providing a safe community (87%-79%), keeping citizens informed about city business (50%-40%), planning for future needs of residents (63%-48%), maintaining a qualified workforce of city employees (57%-42%), providing an adequate forum for public input (47%-35%), working with the school district (63%-49%), and encouraging cultural diversity among residents (40%-30%).

People who claimed to vote either seldom or never were the group more likely to rate as important providing public transportation (94%-80%), enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts (95%-89%), and encouraging cultural diversity among residents (90%-83%). The remaining statements exhibited variances of three percent or less. An additional review shows active voters to assign higher intense ratings to keeping citizens informed about city business (51%-37%), planning for future needs of residents (61%-50%), and providing an adequate forum for public input (47%-32%). Inactive voters assigned higher very important ratings to providing public transportation (41%-32%) as a quality of life indicator.

## **LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH QUALITY OF LIFE ENHANCEMENTS**

After asking respondents to identify the importance of certain elements in determining quality of life in a city, a secondary series of questions was presented to review how the city was doing relative to each element. The question presented was as follows: ***"Please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the work the city of Bryan has done in the following areas...."*** The same methodology was utilized in this survey as in earlier efforts, with eight of the ten items tested for importance in the previous question evaluated in terms of satisfaction. The statements not addressed were providing public transportation and encouraging cultural diversity, with one additional statement, providing adequate city events, rephrased to say providing the appropriate facilities. The evaluation scale utilized for this series was a four-point, very satisfied to very dissatisfied response. For those lacking sufficient information to feel comfortable generating an opinion, a no opinion answer was provided.

Table #28 compares the overall totals generated by respondents about their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with each quality of life statement in each of the three survey years:

**TABLE #28: COMPARISON OF OVERALL SATISFACTION OR  
DISSATISFACTION WITH CITY-RELATED ACTIVITIES -- 1998 -- 2004**

ACTIVITIES	VERY SATISFIED			SATISFIED			DISSATISFIED			VERY DISSATISFIED			NO OPINION			SATIS RATIO
	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	
Providing a safe community	22%	21%	27%	70%	71%	65%	7%	6%	5%	4%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	13.1:1
Providing city facilities for community events	NA	11%	18%	NA	75%	70%	NA	7%	5%	NA	1%	1%	NA	6%	5%	14.7:1
Keeping citizens informed about city business	10%	9%	10%	67%	69%	66%	19%	16%	17%	2%	3%	2%	3%	3%	4%	4.0:1
Planning for future needs of residents	7%	7%	11%	69%	65%	65%	16%	18%	15%	2%	1%	1%	5%	9%	8%	4.7:1
Maintaining a qualified workforce of city employees	11%	9%	11%	73%	75%	74%	8%	8%	7%	0%	1%	0%	7%	9%	8%	12.0:1
Providing an adequate forum for public input	7%	9%	9%	69%	70%	67%	16%	14%	13%	2%	2%	1%	6%	6%	9%	5.4:1
Working with the school district	11%	11%	12%	69%	64%	66%	10%	9%	9%	1%	2%	2%	9%	15%	11%	7.1:1
Enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts	10%	6%	11%	64%	64%	64%	19%	18%	16%	3%	3%	2%	5%	9%	6%	3.3:1

Providing city facilities for community events (88%-6%, 14.7:1), providing a safe community (92%-7%, 13.1:1), and maintaining a qualified workforce of city employees (85%-7%, 12.0:1) were the elements which generated the highest degree of satisfaction to dissatisfaction from survey participants. Respondents were satisfied with each of the described activities, as the item with which they were least satisfied, enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts, still captured a positive ratio of 3.3:1 (75%-18%). The ratio for the other activities was 7.1:1 (69%-11% for working with the school district), 5.4:1 (76%-15% for providing an adequate forum for public input), 4.7:1 (69%-15% for planning for future needs of residents), and 4.0:1 (67%-19% for keeping citizens informed about city business).

The level of enthusiasm, or very satisfied comments residents held for each of these activities was limited, indicating generally positive feelings but lacking passion. For example, the highest intense rating was 27% for providing a safe community. After that, the top ratings were 18% for providing city facilities for community events, 12% for working with the school district, and 11% for planning for future needs of residents, maintaining a qualified workforce of city employees, and enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts. The lowest

rated item was providing an adequate forum for public input, with 9% very satisfied. However, no item stood out in terms of negativity, as the highest very dissatisfied response was just two percent (providing safe community, keeping citizens informed, working with school district, and enforcing neighborhood beautification). And overall dissatisfaction for any statement did not reach 20%. The highest dissatisfaction was 19% for keeping citizens informed about city business, followed by 18% for enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts, and 16% for planning for future needs of residents.

Over the six-year period the survey has been implemented, residents continue to be satisfied with each of the elements. The range of satisfaction in 2004 was 92% (providing a safe community) to 75% (enforcing neighborhood beautification), compared to percentages in 1998 of 92% (providing a safe community) to 74% (enforcing neighborhood beautification). When reviewed by combined satisfaction ratings, no item varied by more than two percent, positively or negatively. Although each of the variances fell within the standard margin of error, three services increased one percent, two decreased by one and two points, and three remained the same. Three elements did display a higher level of intense response, those being providing a safe community (22%-27%), providing city facilities for community events (11%-18%), and planning for future needs of residents (7%-11%). All others shifted in one manner or the other by two percent or less, indicating that the city has maintained the high level of satisfaction established in the original survey. There has not been any marked improvement, but the low rating is still three in four satisfied.

The slight shifting of both satisfaction and dissatisfaction percentages impacted the satisfaction ratio, and in most instances, it shows residents to be more positive than in 1998. This was true for providing a safe community (8.2:1-13.1:1), providing city facilities for community events (10.8:1-14.7:1), keeping citizens informed about city business (3.7:1-4.0:1), planning for future needs of residents (4.2:1-4.7:1), maintaining a qualified workforce of city employees (10.5:1-12.0:1), and providing an adequate forum for public input (4.2:1-5.4:1). The ratio for two activities was lower -- from 7.3:1 to 7.1:1 for working with the school district and 3.4:1 to 3.3:1 for enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts.

Therefore, although satisfaction was generally very positive, the activities residents were least satisfied with have remained the same over the years: enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts, keeping citizens informed about city business, planning for the future needs of residents, and providing an adequate forum for public input. However, note that the satisfaction rates for those activities in 2004 were either 75% or 76%.

A comparison analysis by subsector, as shown in Table #29, aids in identifying shifts in satisfaction or dissatisfaction over the past six years:

**TABLE #29: COMPARING SATISFACTION RATINGS WITH CITY-RELATED ACTIVITIES BY SUBSECTOR -- 1998 -- 2004**

ACTIVITY	DISTRICT 1			DISTRICT 2			DISTRICT 3			DISTRICT 4			DISTRICT 5		
	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004
Providing a safe community	85%	93%	82%	84%	82%	90%	94%	94%	94%	93%	97%	96%	95%	90%	93%
Providing city facilities for community events	NA	79%	93%	NA	88%	90%	NA	87%	92%	NA	88%	84%	NA	87%	87%
Keeping citizens informed about city business	70%	84%	70%	74%	74%	80%	81%	76%	73%	78%	81%	78%	76%	71%	82%
Planning for future needs of residents	77%	81%	74%	73%	72%	77%	81%	70%	79%	76%	74%	73%	76%	66%	75%
Maintaining a qualified workforce of city employees	84%	87%	79%	78%	80%	85%	93%	86%	88%	81%	84%	87%	84%	81%	82%
Providing an adequate forum for public input	69%	79%	78%	73%	68%	74%	83%	81%	78%	70%	82%	79%	85%	80%	72%
Working with the school district	72%	82%	78%	79%	81%	85%	87%	71%	80%	80%	75%	71%	79%	68%	76%
Enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts	74%	75%	74%	74%	67%	74%	83%	70%	80%	72%	75%	69%	58%	64%	77%

In Districts 2 and 3, five activities, respectively, attained satisfaction from at least 80% of residents. That compared to four in District 5, three in District 4, and two in District 1. Two activities scored 80% or better citywide, providing a safe community (82%-90%-94%-96%-93%) and providing city facilities for community events (93%-90%-92%-84%-87%). One item was one percentage point short of achieving that mark, that being maintaining a qualified workforce of city employees (79%-85%-88%-87%-82%). And only two activities failed to attain an 80% or better in at least one city council district. Those were planning for the future needs of residents (74%-77%-79%-73%-75%) and providing an adequate forum for public input (78%-74%-78%-79%-72%).

In terms of current ratings, residents everywhere except District 1 assigned the highest level of satisfaction to the element providing a safe community. People in District 1 thought more of the city providing city facilities for community events (93%) than a safe community (82%). Interestingly, in Districts 2 (90%-90%), and 3

(94%-92%), people were similarly satisfied with both elements. There was more of a variance in Districts 4 (96%-84%) and 5 (93%-87%). Percentages varied for one-half of the statements. Those were for providing a safe community (96% in District 4, to 82% in District 1), keeping citizens informed about city business (82% in District 5, to 70% in District 1), working with the school district (85% in District 2, to 71% in District 4), and enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts (80% in District 3, to 69% in District 4).

When ranked in terms of satisfaction marks, several varied by three positions or more: providing city facilities for community events (1st in District 1, to 3rd in District 4); keeping citizens informed about city business (3rd in District 5, to 8th in Districts 1 and 3), providing an adequate forum for public input (4th in Districts 1 and 4, to 8th in District 5), working with the school district (4th in Districts 2 and 3, to 7th in District 4), and enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts (5th in Districts 3 and 5, to 8th in Districts 2 and 4).

Although Table #28 shows that overall attitudes have not changed significantly between 1998 and 2004, Table #29 shows shifting attitudes throughout the city. For example, in District 2, seven of the eight elements showed improvement of one percent or more. Those gains were offset by more frequent declines in Districts 3 (1-6), 4 (3-4), and 5 (2-5), again of any variety. In at least three city council districts, residents thought higher of providing city facilities for community events (Districts 1, 2, and 3) and providing an adequate forum for public input (Districts 1, 2, and 4). By comparison, diminished ratings were evident in at least three subsectors relative to planning for future needs of residents (all but District 2), maintaining a qualified workforce of city employees (Districts 1, 3, and 5), and working with the school district (Districts 3, 4, and 5).

District 1 was more positive this year about the elements of providing city facilities for community events (NA-79%-93%), providing an adequate forum for public input (69%-79%-78%), and working with the school district (72%-82%-78%). Note that none of the positive improvements were gradual. The only item to decline by more than three percent was maintaining a qualified workforce of city employees (84%-87%-79%).

In District 2, residents expressed an increase of at least three percent satisfaction for providing a safe community (84%-82%-90%), keeping citizens informed about city business (74%-74%-80%), planning for future needs of residents (73%-72%-77%), maintaining a qualified workforce of city employees (78%-80%-85%), and working with the school district (79%-81%-85%). Note that in the case of city employees and the school district, satisfaction rates have increased each year, not the case for the other items.



Providing city facilities for community events (NA-87%-92%) was the only item to secure a higher satisfaction rating among respondents in District 3. Comparatively, residents here appeared to think less of keeping citizens informed about city business (81%-76%-73%), maintaining a qualified workforce of city employees (93%-86%-88%), providing an adequate forum for public input (83%-81%-78%), and working with the school district (87%-71%-80%).

Residents in District 4 were more positive about the city maintaining a qualified workforce of city employees (81%-84%-87%) and providing an adequate forum for public input (70%-82%-79%), while being less satisfied with the city providing city facilities for community events (NA-88%-84%) and working with the school district (80%-75%-71%). The other items shifted by no more than three percent and so are not listed here. District 5 residents voiced a higher level of satisfaction with just two items: keeping citizens informed about city business (76%-71%-82%) and enforcing neighborhood beautification (58%-64%-77%). Conversely, they were less satisfied in only one, providing an adequate forum for public input (85%-80%-72%).

For further review, Table #30 lists current satisfaction and dissatisfaction percentages by community and voting activity, to identify possible discrepancies based on activity:

**TABLE #30: SATISFACTION OR DISSATISFACTION WITH CITY-RELATED ACTIVITIES BY COMMUNITY ACTIVITY AND VOTING ACTIVITY**

ACTIVITY	COMMUNITY ACTIVITY				VOTING ACTIVITY			
	ACTIVE/INFORMED		ISSUES/LIVE HERE		ALWAYS/OFTEN		SELDOM/NEVER	
	SATIS	DISSAT	SATIS	DISSAT	SATIS	DISSAT	SATIS	DISSAT
Providing a safe community	82%	7%	92%	7%	95%	4%	87%	13%
Providing city facilities for community events	88%	7%	89%	5%	88%	6%	89%	6%
Keeping citizens informed about city business	73%	23%	83%	13%	74%	22%	84%	11%
Planning for future needs of residents	74%	19%	79%	12%	74%	18%	82%	11%
Maintaining a qualified workforce of city employees	84%	7%	86%	7%	85%	6%	86%	9%
Providing an adequate forum for public input	77%	16%	76%	14%	76%	16%	80%	12%
Working with the school district	77%	11%	81%	10%	76%	10%	82%	14%
Enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts	72%	21%	79%	15%	75%	18%	76%	20%

People who were less active within their community nonetheless voiced higher satisfaction with providing a safe community (92%-82%), keeping citizens informed about city business (83%-73%), planning for the future needs of residents (79%-74%), working with the school district (81%-77%), and enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts (79%-72%). Note that dissatisfaction among the two subsets was similar regarding providing a safe community (7%-7%), an indication that active community members were more prone to give a no opinion response. However, in the case of keeping citizens informed (23%-13%), planning for future needs (19%-12%), and enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts (21%-15%), those active in the community were the most dissatisfied. Overall, only one item attained a higher mark among active community residents and that was by just one point. The rankings showed satisfaction to be different for providing a safe community (3rd for active, to 1st for inactive), keeping citizens informed about city business (7th, to 4th), providing an adequate forum for public input (4th, to 8th), and enforcing neighborhood beautification efforts (8th, to 6th).

Active voters voiced higher satisfaction with providing a safe community (95%-87%), while inactive voters were more positive about keeping citizens informed about city business (84%-74%), planning for future needs of residents (82%-74%), providing an adequate forum for public input (80%-76%), and working with the school district (82%-76%). People who voted with any regularity were more often dissatisfied with how the city was keeping citizens informed about city business (22%-11%), planning for future needs of residents (18%-11%), and providing an adequate forum for public input (16%-12%). Inactive voters were

only most dissatisfied with the city providing a safe community (13%-4%) and working with the school district (14%-10%). The rankings showed people felt differently about the elements of keeping citizens informed about city business (7th of active, to 4th of inactive), planning for future needs of residents (8th, to 5th), providing an adequate forum for public involvement (4th, to 7th), and enforcing neighborhood beautification (6th, to 8th).

## **SATISFACTION WITH GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS**

Citizen reaction to the character of the city, as defined through the Policy Governance set of rules, was the primary thrust of this series of statements. This is the third year that this series of questions has been incorporated into the survey, although with some variation. Using statement association, respondents were asked to agree or disagree with certain aspects of city life, introduced by the question: ***"Please tell me how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements."*** Each statement began with the phrase, ***"In Bryan..."***. The statements were drawn from the Policy Governance Rules and included questions about specific activities (trash and garbage collection and disposal, utilization of recycling and planning, decision-making by residents, and recycling is appropriately utilized) as well as attitudes about the city (the character and identity of neighborhood entrances, that people take responsibility for the appearance of the city, that neighborhood entrances are symbolic of the character of the city or neighborhood). Three of the statements were included only in the last survey, with one of those rephrased. The answer categories formed a general four-point strong agreement to strong disagreement evaluation scale, or respondents could choose a no opinion response.

Table #31 compares the answer percentages among all respondents presented from 1998 through 2004:

**TABLE #31: COMPARISON OF OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS -- 1998 -- 2004**

ITEM	STRONGLY AGREE			AGREE			DISAGREE			STRONGLY DISAGREE			NO OPINION			RATIO
	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	
Trash and garbage are collected and appropriately disposed of in a timely manner	28%	24%	40%	62%	67%	55%	8%	6%	4%	1%	2%	0%	1%	1%	1%	23.8:1
The city provides appropriate recycling	NA	12%	16%	NA	55%	54%	NA	20%	19%	NA	6%	4%	NA	7%	7%	3.0:1
Citizens in Bryan recycle appropriately	NA	4%	5%	NA	35%	39%	NA	38%	36%	NA	9%	5%	NA	15%	14%	1.0:1
Citizens participate in planning and decision-making	6%	3%	3%	58%	52%	55%	23%	28%	27%	3%	3%	2%	11%	14%	13%	2.0:1
Neighborhood entrances are symbolic of the character of the city or neighborhood	NA	5%	6%	NA	60%	63%	NA	21%	21%	NA	3%	1%	NA	11%	9%	3.1:1
Neighborhood entrances are easily accessible and identifiable	6%	4%	5%	64%	68%	70%	18%	20%	19%	1%	2%	1%	11%	6%	6%	3.8:1
People take responsibility for the appearance of the city	6%	2%	4%	70%	56%	61%	19%	35%	29%	1%	4%	3%	5%	4%	3%	2.0:1

Overwhelmingly, residents voiced the highest degree of agreement to the statement that "trash and garbage are collected and appropriately disposed of in a timely manner" (95%-4%, 23.8:1). Second tier ratings were accorded to three other statements in which agreement was at or above the 70 percentile: "neighborhood entrances are easily accessible and identifiable" (75%-20%, 3.8:1), "neighborhood entrances are symbolic of the character of the city or neighborhood" (69%-22%, 3.1:1), and "the city provides appropriate recycling" (70%-23%, 3.0:1). The three remaining statements attained a ratio of 2.0:1 (58%-29%) for "citizens participate in planning and decision-making", 2.0:1 (65%-32%) for "people take responsibility for the appearance of the city", and 1.0:1 (44%-41%) for "citizens in Bryan recycle appropriately," with the latter the only item to not attain majority agreement ratings, although it did achieve plurality favorable findings.

Forty percent of the sample strongly agreed that trash and garbage are collected and appropriately disposed of in a timely manner, far and away the statement that collected the highest level of intensity or passion from respondents. The next highest percentage was less than half, with 16% strongly agreeing that the city provides appropriate recycling. After that, 6% were in intense agreement that neighborhood entrances are symbolic of the city's character, and 5% that citizens recycle appropriately, and neighborhood entrances are accessible and identifiable. This year, the 5% who strongly agreed with the appropriate recycling statement was identical to the percentage who strongly disagreed, indicating that those most passionate about this statement shared opposing views. Strong disagreement did not exceed five percent, but because the intense positive responses were so low, were similar in two other instances. Those were relative to citizens participating in planning and decision-making (3%-2%) and taking responsibility for the appearance of the city (4%-3%).

With the exception of the trash collection statement, none of the statements generated much excitement, although the consensus was that each action related to a statement was looked upon positively, with the possible exception of citizens recycling. Upwards of 70% felt positively about the city's handling of recycling as well as neighborhood entrances, while a lower percentage looked favorably on citizen participation and responsibility.

Of the statements first presented to respondents in 1998, agreement has gradually increased relative to the trash and garbage collection statement (90%-91%-95%), as well as the neighborhood entrances being accessible and identifiable (70%-72%-75%). For the two other statements, current agreement ratings are down from the benchmark findings, but are an improvement over the last survey. More improvement was noted for the statement about people taking responsibility for the appearance of the city (76%-58%-65%) than for citizens participating in planning and decision-making (64%-55%-58%). Of the three statements first included in the 2001 survey, agreement increased five points (39%-44%) for citizens recycle appropriately, four (65%-69%) for neighborhood entrances are symbolic of the character of the city, and three (67%-70%) for city providing appropriate recycling, respectively.

Overall disagreement declined for half of the statements. Those were trash and garbage being collected and disposed of (9%-8%-4%), and citizens recycling appropriately (NA-47%-41%). The other one declined by just two percent. And of the three in which disagreement increased, only one was by more than one percent, but that was a 12 point jump in negativity for people taking responsibility for the appearance of the city (20%-39%-32%), although the current rating is lower than what was voiced in 2001.

Strong agreement jumped significantly for the trash and garbage collection statement (28%-24%-40%), especially between 2001 and 2004. The only other statement to increase by more than two percent was a four point increase between 2001 and 2004 for city providing appropriate recycling (NA-12%-16%). Strong disagreement also declined by four percent for the citizen recycling statement (NA-9%-5%). Agreement ratings remained consistent for two of the four statements presented in both prior surveys.

A comparison of the ratios from 1998 and 2004 shows how responses have shifted either positively or negatively. The most significant improvement was for the trash and garbage collection statement, from 10.0:1 to 23.8:1. Other improvements were noted for the city providing appropriate recycling (2.6:1-3.0:1), citizens recycling appropriately (0.8:1-1.0:1), and the two neighborhood entrance statements (2.7:1-3.1:1 and 3.7:1-3.8:1), with the accessibility statement showing the least improvement of the two. Comparing ratios also showed respondents less favorable to the other two statements, those being people taking responsibility for the appearance of the city (3.8:1-2.0:1) and citizens participate in planning and decision-making (2.5:1-2.0:1). It would appear that residents are less positive about citizen involvement and responsibility statements this year than in the past.

Table #32 compares the subsector agreement ratings from each year, to further review attitudinal shifts based on geographic preferences:

**TABLE #32: COMPARISON OF OVERALL AGREEMENT RATING OF  
GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS BY SUBSECTOR -- 1998 -- 2004**

CHARACTERISTIC	DISTRICT 1			DISTRICT 2			DISTRICT 3			DISTRICT 4			DISTRICT 5		
	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004
Trash and garbage are collected and appropriately disposed of in a timely manner	87%	93%	94%	80%	91%	91%	94%	91%	93%	93%	97%	96%	91%	82%	99%
The city provides appropriate recycling	NA	74%	80%	NA	76%	83%	NA	63%	67%	NA	68%	66%	NA	61%	56%
Citizens in Bryan recycle appropriately	NA	46%	54%	NA	58%	62%	NA	31%	39%	NA	36%	38%	NA	26%	37%
Citizens participate in planning and decision-making	70%	52%	61%	61%	64%	69%	71%	50%	58%	55%	60%	58%	67%	51%	46%
Neighborhood entrances are symbolic of the character of the city or neighborhood	NA	68%	64%	NA	65%	75%	NA	66%	70%	NA	64%	69%	NA	61%	70%
Neighborhood entrances are easily accessible and identifiable	70%	84%	82%	69%	67%	78%	75%	75%	69%	68%	71%	70%	67%	64%	77%
People take responsibility for the appearance of the city	72%	74%	61%	85%	52%	63%	78%	54%	67%	70%	61%	66%	74%	50%	66%

Ninety percent of residents citywide agreed in 2004 that trash and garbage are collected and appropriately disposed of in a timely manner (94%-91%-93%-96%-99%). While everyone agreed with the top-ranked item, the same was not true regarding some of the secondary issues. For example, ranking second in Districts 1, 4, and 5 was the statement about neighborhood entrances being accessible and identifiable (82%, 70%, and 77%), compared to the appropriate recycling from the city item in District 2 (83%) and neighborhood entrances being symbolic of the character of the city or neighborhood in District 3 (70%). In addition, the statements that drew the third highest level of agreement in their respective districts were city providing appropriate recycling in District 1 (80%), neighborhood entrances being accessible and identifiable in Districts 2 and 3 (78% and 69%), and entrances being symbolic of the character of the city or neighborhood in both Districts 4 and 5 (69% and 46%).

Overall, District 1 appeared to be most positive about the respective statements, as percentages exceeded 80% three times. That compared to twice in District 2 and only once everywhere else. District 5 respondents were most likely to voice

disagreement with several of the statements as presented, especially about recycling and citizen participation.

Variances were evident throughout the city. Those included the city providing appropriate recycling (80% in District 1, to 56% in District 5) and citizens recycling appropriately (62% in District 2, to 37% in District 5). Agreement also varied for the statements about citizens participating in planning and decision-making (69% in District 2, to 46% in District 5), neighborhood entrances being symbolic of the city or neighborhood (75% in District 2, to 64% in District 1) as well as being easily accessible and identifiable (82% in District 1, to 69% in District 3). In addition to the trash and garbage statement, the only other one to generate a consensus viewpoint was people take responsibility for the appearance of the city (61%-63%-67%-66%-66%).

In comparing current and benchmark results, one finds that more statements drew improved ratings in at least four of the five city council districts (four) than diminished findings (two). Improvements were noted for trash and garbage collection (all but District 3), citizens recycling appropriately (all districts), and both neighborhood entrance statements (all but District 1 for one and District 3 for the other). Declining attitudes related to citizens participating in planning and decision-making (all but District 2) and taking responsibility for the appearance of their city (all districts). Overall, 21 of the 35 variables were ranked higher this year than in 1998. That compared with 14 that generated lower agreement ratings.

Four statements in District 1 attained higher ratings than when first presented, either in 1998 or 2001. Those were the statements about trash and garbage collection (87%-93%-94%), city providing appropriate recycling (NA-74%-80%) as well as citizens recycling appropriately (NA-46%-54%), and neighborhood entrances being accessible and identifiable (70%-84%-82%), although the latter statement was less positive than in 2001. Comparatively, residents here were not as positive when it came to believing citizens participate in planning and decision-making (70%-52%-61%), neighborhood entrances are symbolic of the character of the city (NA-68%-64%) or people take responsibility for appearance of city (72%-74%-61%). Note that citizen participation ratings were higher this year than in 2001, the opposite about people being responsible.

All but one statement in District 2 generated higher agreement ratings this year than in the benchmark year and each by more than three percent. Those were about trash and garbage collection (80%-91%-91%), appropriate recycling (NA-76%-83%), planning and decision-making (NA-58%-62%), citizen participation (61%-64%-69%), and neighborhood entrances' symbolism (NA-65%-75%) and accessibility (69%-67%-78%). The only statement that did not achieve higher



agreement ratings was the personal responsibility statement (85%-52%-63%), although the current findings were an improvement over previous results.

Agreement in District 3 was more likely to be less than more in comparison to previous ratings. In addition to the trash and garbage collection statement declining by one percent, positive ratings were lower relative to the citizen participation (71%-50%-58%), neighborhood entrance accessibility (75%-75%-69%), and personal responsibility (78%-54%-67%) statements. Conversely, the city's recycling (NA-63%-67%) item improved four percent, half the amount that noted citizens recycling (NA-31%-39%). The character of neighborhood entrances (NA-66%-70%) was also rated more highly this year than in 2001.

Attitudes in District 4 have for the most part been stable over the last six years. For example, four statements attained higher agreement ratings in 2004, compared to 3 in which positive attitudes declined. However, only two shifted by more than three percent. One was a positive increase (NA-64%-69% for the neighborhood entrances being symbolic of the character), while the other was a decline (70%-61%-66% for people taking responsibility for the appearance of the city).

Four items in District 5 showed a higher level of agreement this year than in the past. And in this case, all were by more than three points: trash and garbage are collected appropriately (91%-82%-99%), citizens recycle appropriately (NA-26%-37%), entrances are symbolic of the city's character (NA-61%-70%), and easily accessible and identifiable (67%-64%-77%). What was thought less of this year dealt with the city providing appropriate recycling (NA-61%-56%), citizens participating in planning and decision-making (67%-51%-46%), and taking responsibility for the appearance of the city (74%-50%-66%).

Table #33 tracks agreement ratings for the statements from the perspective of community and voting activity:

**TABLE #33: QUALITY RATING OF GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS BY  
COMMUNITY ACTIVITY AND VOTING ACTIVITY**

CHARACTERISTIC	COMMUNITY ACTIVITY				VOTING ACTIVITY			
	ACTIVE/INFORMED		ISSUES/LIVE HERE		ALWAYS/OFTEN		SELDOM/NEVER	
	AGREE	DISAGR	AGREE	DISAGR	AGREE	DISAGR	AGREE	DISAGR
Trash and garbage are collected and appropriately disposed of in a timely manner	96%	2%	92%	7%	96%	3%	92%	7%
The City provides appropriate recycling	68%	26%	73%	19%	69%	25%	72%	19%
Citizens in Bryan recycle appropriately	42%	44%	49%	38%	41%	44%	52%	35%
Citizens participate in planning and decision-making	60%	29%	56%	27%	55%	33%	68%	20%
Neighborhood entrances are symbolic of the character of the city or neighborhood	70%	21%	72%	21%	70%	22%	71%	18%
Neighborhood entrances are easily accessible and identifiable	73%	21%	77%	18%	75%	21%	76%	17%
People take responsibility for the appearance of the city	67%	31%	64%	32%	66%	32%	63%	30%

Active members of the community more often agreed that trash and garbage are collected and appropriately disposed of (96%-92%) and citizens participate in planning and decision-making (60%-56%). Comparatively, it was nonactive individuals who were in more agreement that the city provides appropriate recycling (73%-68%), that citizens recycle appropriately (49%-34%), and that neighborhood entrances are easily identifiable (77%-73%). Three statements generated higher disagreement within their respective subsets. Active respondents more often disagreed with both recycling statements -- 26%-19% for city providing appropriate recycling and 44%-38% for citizens recycling appropriately, while inactive respondents were more negative toward the trash and garbage statement (7%-2%).

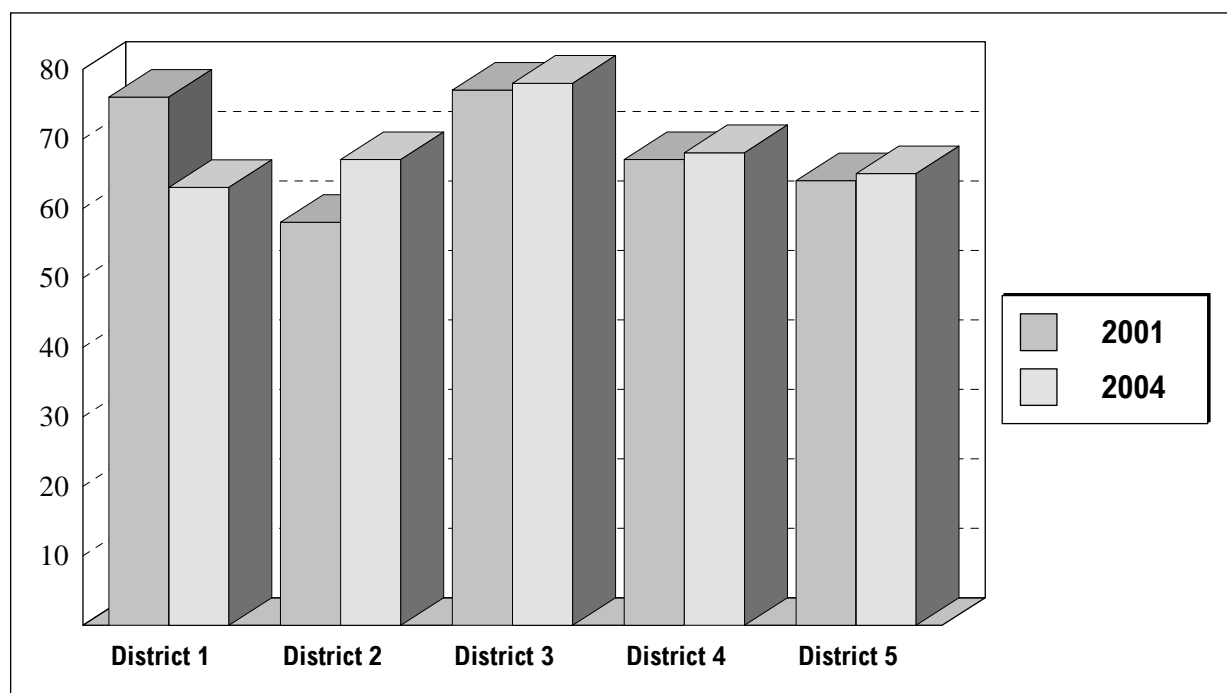
Nonvoters expressed higher agreement with the statements citizens recycle appropriately (52%-41%) and citizens participate in planning and decision-making (68%-55%). Voters were more positive about trash and garbage being collected and appropriately disposed of (96%-92%). However, voters also tended to be more negative toward these issues. Those included city provides appropriate recycling (25%-19%), citizens recycle appropriately (44%-35%), citizens participate in planning and decision-making (33%-20%),

neighborhood entrances are symbolic of the character of the city (22%-18%), and neighborhood entrances are easily accessible and identifiable (21%-17%).

## **CULTURAL DIVERSITY STATEMENT**

One question that was dealt with differently concerned the governance statement on cultural diversity. In 1998, it was included in the previous listing as a statement, and at that time 69% agreed that residents in Bryan value cultural diversity. However, in 2001, the decision was made to look at this issue as a separate question rather than part of a series. This year's survey followed that methodology, as interviewers queried, **"Please tell me how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'In the city of Bryan, people value cultural diversity.'"** The 4-point strong agreement to strong disagreement response scale was utilized to gather opinions. A total of 68% either agreed (59%) or agreed strongly (9%) that people value cultural diversity, compared to 24% who either disagreed (22%) or strongly disagreed (2%). An additional 7% of the sample chose the no opinion response, resulting in a ratio of agreement to disagreement of 2.8:1. The current rating was exactly that voiced in 2001 (68%-68%), although this year more people strongly agreed (6%-9%) and fewer strongly disagreed (5%-2%). The ratio this year was slightly higher than that voiced in 2001 (2.6:1).

Figure 6 illustrates that this statement generated different opinions throughout the city:



**Figure 6: Comparison Of Agreement Ratings With Value Cultural Diversity Statement By Subsector -- 2001 & 2004**

This statement did not generate a significant amount of passion in the form of intense agreement, although the percentages were higher this year. For example, in 2001, strong agreement did not exceed 9% in any part of the city. This year, two subsectors were at 9% (Districts 3 and 4) and two above it (11% in District 5 and 12% in District 2). Overall agreement varied significantly in Districts 1 and 2. In District 1, residents were less likely to agree with it, as agreement declined 13 points (76%-63%). The opposite was true in District 2, where a higher percentage of respondents agreed with the statement (58%-67%). In Districts 3 (77%-78%), 4 (67%-68%), and 5 (64%-65%), there was no statistical variance. Note that the variance in 2001 was nearly 20 points (76% in District 1, to 58% in District 2), while ratings varied slightly less this year (78% in District 3, to 63% in District 1). Agreement among men declined five percent (70%-65%), the same figure that showed ratings among women improving (67%-72%).

Agreement among residents who were positive about community improvement did not vary (73%-73%) when comparing the two surveys. There was also little change if one felt that the community was the same (60%-62%) or worse (61%-59%). Both active and inactive voters felt similarly about this issue (69%-69%), which is not much of a change over their previous attitudes (69%-68%). Active community members were less committed to this statement this year (73%-67%), although the opposite was true with inactive respondents, as agreement with this statement increased (65%-72%).

How someone evaluated the city council impacted their viewpoint on cultural diversity. For example, survey participants who were positive in their opinion about the city council were more likely to agree with this statement (76%) than if the council's performance was perceived to be negative (62%) or if one had no opinion as to performance (62%). The more positive one rated the manner in which the city was maintained (89%-68%-56%), the more popular the cultural diversity statement became. Renters were slightly more likely to agree with this statement (71%-68%), but not at a statistically significant variance.

Parents of children under the age of 6 formed the parental subset least likely to agree with this statement (62%-69%-68%-72%), with nonparents at 69% agreement, a subset variance of ten points. Ratings also fluctuated based on tenure in the community (67%-66%-70%) as well as age (65%-64%-75%), although in both instances, it was the elder respondent who was more likely to agree that in Bryan people value cultural diversity.

## ***SERVICE OR FACILITY TO PROVIDE***

Each survey has included one open-ended question that asked residents to discuss facilities or services that they would like to see offered by the city. The question was as follows: "***What service or facility would you like to see the city provide which it currently does not?***" Fewer people answered this question (161) than in either 1998 (266) or 2001 (181), an indication that each year people are having more and more difficulty answering or are more reluctant to give an answer. A total of 12 general or miscellaneous categories were generated from the full range of comments, with the most popular suggestions being curbside recycling (30%) and public transportation (12%). In addition, 9% mentioned more recreational activities and an athletic complex/recreation center.

Other secondary suggestions included city leadership/services (7%), services for the elderly (5%), and street maintenance (4%). Several different types of recreational facilities were also suggested, namely a theme park/stadium/zoo (6%), community pool/water park (4%), bike paths (2%), and ice skating/hockey (2%).

Recall that fewer and fewer suggestions are being generated each year. That said, the percentages suggesting curbside recycling (23%-28%-30%) and public transportation (4%-8%-12%) continue to climb. One response declined when compared to 2001, although not relative to 1998 and that was more recreational activities (8%-17%-9%). The need for an athletic complex/recreation center remained consistent since 2001 (NA-10%-9%) when it was first raised.

Several services first included in 2001 failed to receive mention this year, including improved code enforcement (3%-0%), beautification efforts (3%-0%), expanded police services (3%-0%), redevelopment of downtown (3%-0%), improved communications (2%-0%), job placement assistance (1%-0%), and health clinic (1%-0%). As stated, they were replaced by a desire for additional recreational types of facilities, namely a theme park-type facility, community pool, bike paths, and ice skating/hockey.

Table #34 summarizes both the previous responses and the current answers, and subdivides the 2004 responses by subsector and gender:

**TABLE #34: SERVICE OR FACILITY FOR CITY TO PROVIDE BY SUBSECTOR AND GENDER**

SUGGESTION	OVERALL			DSTRCT 1	DSTRCT 2	DSTRCT 3	DSTRCT 4	DSTRCT 5	SEX OF RESPONDENT	
	1998	2001	2004						MALE	FEMALE
Curbside recycling	23%	28%	30%	22%	11%	36%	26%	43%	35%	26%
Public transportation	4%	8%	12%	13%	5%	11%	13%	16%	10%	15%
Miscellaneous	10%	12%	9%	9%	5%	11%	13%	5%	11%	8%
More recreational activities	8%	17%	9%	9%	21%	11%	7%	5%	11%	8%
Athletic complex/ recreation center	NA	10%	9%	13%	26%	6%	4%	5%	4%	12%
City leadership/ services	NA	NA	7%	13%	11%	8%	7%	0%	8%	6%
Theme park/ stadium/zoo	NA	NA	6%	9%	11%	0%	9%	5%	4%	8%
Services for elderly	NA	4%	5%	0%	5%	8%	7%	3%	1%	8%
Improved street maintenance	NA	5%	4%	4%	5%	6%	2%	5%	4%	4%
Community pool/ water park	NA	NA	4%	4%	0%	0%	9%	3%	4%	3%
Bike paths/lanes	NA	NA	2%	4%	0%	0%	2%	5%	4%	1%
Ice skating/ hockey	NA	NA	2%	0%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	1%

The scientific accuracy of these responses, especially when quantified by the geographic subsets, is limited because of the number of collected comments, which ranged from 46 in District 4 down to 19 in District 2. However, curbside recycling was far and away the number one suggestion, with an average rating of 30%. It was first in District 5, at 43%, in District 3 at 36%, in District 4 at 25%, and in District 1 at 22%. However, the 11% who suggested this item in District 2 made it the third highest rated suggestion. More popular in this part of the city were

athletic complex/recreation center (26%) and more recreational activities (21%). In addition, 11% also mentioned city leadership/services and theme park/stadium/zoo. Also note that the citywide variance relative to the primary response was 32%.

Public transportation ranked second overall, with responses ranging from 16% in District 5 to 5% in District 2. It was the second most popular suggestion in District 5, but was tied with other items elsewhere. In District 1, it tied with athletic complex/recreation center and city leadership/services (each 13%), while in District 3, it drew the same percentage as more recreational activities. The response of more recreational activities (21% in District 2, to 5% in District 5), athletic complex/recreation center (26% in District 2, to 4% in District 4), and city leadership/services (11% in District 2, to 0% in District 5) each generated variances of more than 10%, an indication of the diversity of opinion among those who chose to respond to this question.

Men were more interested in curbside recycling (35%-26%), while women wanted to see the city provide public transportation (15%-10%), athletic complex/recreation center (12%-4%), and more services for the elderly (8%-1%). Both groups were similar in their desire for more recreational activities (11%-8%) and city leadership/services (8%-6%).

No person who rated the community as worse suggested curbside recycling (30%-41%-0%) as the service the city should provide. In fact, for the 17 individuals who comprised that subset, their number one suggestion, after the non-classified miscellaneous response (24%), was city leadership/services, with 18%. Those more positive about community improvement were more likely to suggest public transportation (14%-11%-6%) and athletic complex/recreation center (10%-7%-6%). Active voters more frequently listed curbside recycling (34%-20%) as the service they desired from the city. Comparatively, public transportation (27%-8%) and more recreational activities (12%-8%) were items more often desired by people who chose not to vote. How active or inactive a person was in his or her community did not impact the need for curbside recycling (30%-28%), as it generated similar comments. However, public transportation (21%-8%) was a more prominent demand among inactive residents, while those who were active said more recreational activities (11%-7%) and athletic complex/recreation center (11%-5%) were what the city needed to provide.

A fair or poor perception of city council performance led respondents to more often suggest the city provide curbside recycling (33%-28%), while a positive impression was a stronger indicator for offering public transportation (14%-8%). How the council performed did not impact the suggestions of more recreational activities (11%-10%), athletic complex/recreation center (8%-9%), or city leadership/services (8%-8%). People who were undecided as to the council split

their preferences between curbside recycling and public transportation (28%-28%), as well as athletic complex/recreation center (11%). The more negative one rated city maintenance, the more often he or she mentioned curbside recycling (26%-30%-33%) and city leadership/services (5%-4%-12%). Public transportation (5%-16%-8%) was least important to those most intense as well as least complimentary toward how the city is maintained. Another response that was viewed in a similar manner was more recreational activities (0%-12%-8%), although there was a larger gap between the extreme positive and general negative responses. Renters were much more likely to see the city provide public transportation (21%-11%) and more recreational activities (17%-8%), but also curbside recycling (33%-29%). These responses were tempered by the fact that just 24 individuals responding to this question were renters, a less than accurate sampling.

Curbside recycling was of more concern to parents of young children than any other parental subset (40%-33%-26%-23%), with findings showing the older the parents, the less apt they were to suggest this activity. Nonparents were 30% likely to generate this suggestion. More recreational activities (8%-10%-12%-3%) generated higher expectations from parents of children under 18, although nonparents were as likely to give this response as parents of teenagers (12%). The older the child, the more likely athletic complex/recreation center (4%-7%-12%-14%, to 4%) came to the forefront as a facility desired. Note that recreational activities were three times more popular than athletic complex/recreation center (12%-4%) to people without children under the age of 18. Both curbside recycling (41%-48%-23%) and public transportation (18%-10%-12%) were more popular with newer residents rather than long-term city inhabitants. Comparatively, more tenured residents suggested more recreational activities (9%-3%-11%), athletic complex/recreation center (5%-7%-10%), and city leadership/services (0%-0%-10%). By age, it was younger respondents who saw the need for curbside recycling (39%-30%-23%), as well as more recreational activities (15%-9%-6%). Comparatively, public transportation (6%-14%-13%) and city leadership (3%-7%-10%) drew more interest from older respondents.

## **RATING OF TAXES**

Attitudes about city taxes continued to be framed in the context of opinions about the three main local taxing entities. This was the same method utilized in 1998. Respondents were first informed that they paid taxes to several taxing entities. They were then asked, ***"Please tell me if the taxes you pay to the following taxing entities are very high, high, about right, low or very low?"*** The



government entities included were the City of Bryan, the local school district and Brazos County.

Table #35 compares the overall distribution of opinions in both 1998 and 2001 on the five-point scale:

**TABLE #35: COMPARISON OF OVERALL RATING OF TAXES PAID TO TAXING ENTITIES -- 1998 -- 2004**

TAXING ENTITY	VERY HIGH			HIGH			ABOUT RIGHT			LOW/VERY LOW			NO OPINION		
	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004
School District	10%	10%	10%	23%	23%	32%	49%	43%	37%	2%	4%	3%	16%	21%	18%
City of Bryan	8%	7%	6%	23%	21%	26%	51%	49%	47%	2%	2%	3%	16%	20%	17%
Brazos County	6%	7%	6%	21%	19%	24%	54%	49%	47%	3%	4%	3%	15%	22%	19%

Forty-two percent of the full sample rated taxes paid to the school district either high or very high. That compared to lower percentages who assigned similar ratings to city (32%) or county (30%) taxes. One-half of the sample (50%) believed that both city and school district taxes were about right, ten points higher than the rating given to school taxes (40%). For each taxing entity, approximately one in five had no opinion as to the rating of taxes they paid.

When these statistics are compared to previous marks, note that residents were more critical of school taxes than ever before (33%-33%-42%), as high and very high ratings jumped nearly ten percent. Comparatively, high ratings of city (31%-28%-32%) and county taxes (27%-26%-30%) have shown minimal variance over the past six years. However, the same was not true with about right or low ratings, which have gradually declined for each taxing entity in each survey year. The decline was most pronounced with school district taxes (51%-47%-40%), compared to more minor declines regarding county taxes (57%-53%-50%) and even more so relative to city taxes (53%-51%-50%). The ratio of about right to high attitudes for city taxes this year was 1.6:1. That compared to a ratio of 1.7:1 in 1998.

Table #36 offers a closer look at opinions of taxes within each of the districts for each year the survey was conducted, to review shifts in perceptions:

**TABLE #36: COMPARISON OF OVERALL HIGH RATING OF TAXES PAID TO TAXING ENTITIES BY SUBSECTOR -- 1998 -- 2004**

TAXING ENTITY	DISTRICT 1			DISTRICT 2			DISTRICT 3			DISTRICT 4			DISTRICT 5		
	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004
School District	46%	45%	38%	41%	36%	39%	30%	24%	39%	36%	32%	49%	15%	29%	40%
City of Bryan	41%	48%	37%	41%	32%	30%	28%	21%	34%	31%	21%	33%	16%	28%	30%
Brazos County	34%	39%	39%	38%	28%	26%	28%	17%	29%	27%	23%	34%	7%	25%	27%

Current findings show District 4 most concerned with school district taxes (49%, to 38% in District 1), compared to District 1 focusing on the amount of taxes paid to both the city (37%, to 30% in Districts 2 and 5) and the county (39%, to 26% in District 2). Note that plus ten-point variances were evident regarding both school district and county taxes, whereas the ratings for city taxes were more consensus-like. District 1 was consistent in its concern with taxes paid to all three entities, as just two percent separated the high and low rating. The variance in the other districts ranged between 10% and 13%. Also, District 1 was the only region to assign higher high ratings to an entity other than the school district.

In terms of trending to benchmark results, Districts 1 and 2 were less likely to assign increased high ratings. This was not the case elsewhere in the city, as in Districts 3, 4, and 5, all high ratings were greater this year than ever before.

District 1 was less likely to assign higher ratings to school district taxes (46%-45%-38%) as well as city taxes (41%-48%-37%), although the decline was more pronounced when compared to 2001 findings. Respondents in District 1 were inclined to rate county taxes higher than in 1998 (34%-39%-39%). Perceptions toward city (41%-32%-30%) and county taxes (38%-28%-26%) dropped significantly in District 2, while attitudes toward school taxes remained the same (41%-36%-39%).

District 3 assigned increased high ratings to both school (30%-34%-39%) and city (28%-21%-34%) taxes, but treated county taxes differently (28%-17%-29%), although the current rating is more in line with benchmark results and not 2001 findings. High or very high ratings for city taxes in District 4 (31%-21%-33%) changed when compared to 2001, but not in terms of benchmark trending. However, the percentage rating school taxes jumped (36%-32%-49%), as did county taxes (27%-23%-34%), although not to the same extent. In District 5, high ratings between 1998 and 2004 have more than doubled. For example, the belief that school district taxes were high or very high jumped from 16% in 1998, to 21% in 2001, to 40% this year. Significant increases were also noted for both city (16%-28%-30%) and county (7%-25%-27%) taxes.

Table #37 below contrasts tax attitudes between more active and less active community members, as well as frequent versus infrequent voters:

**TABLE #37: RATING OF TAXES PAID TO TAXING ENTITIES BY COMMUNITY ACTIVITY AND VOTING ACTIVITY**

TAXING ENTITY	COMMUNITY ACTIVITY				VOTING ACTIVITY			
	ACTIVE/INFORMED		ISSUES/LIVE HERE		ALWAYS/OFTEN		SELDOM/NEVER	
	HIGH	RIGHT LOW	HIGH	RIGHT LOW	HIGH	RIGHT LOW	HIGH	RIGHT LOW
School District	41%	45%	42%	34%	46%	42%	33%	37%
City of Bryan	31%	57%	37%	40%	32%	55%	31%	39%
Brazos County	28%	58%	35%	38%	31%	56%	29%	39%

Community activity did not impact whether or not someone considered their school district taxes high or very high (41%-42%). It did affect the percentage who rated them about right or low (45%-34%), as inactive residents tended to have higher no opinion responses. City taxes appeared to be of more concern to residents who were less active in the community (37%-31%), as active residents assigned higher about right or low ratings (57%-40%). The same trend was evident relative to county taxes -- inactive residents more inclined to rate them high (35%-28%) and active respondents to believe they were about right or low (58%-38%). No opinion responses in all three instances were more prominent with inactive community members.

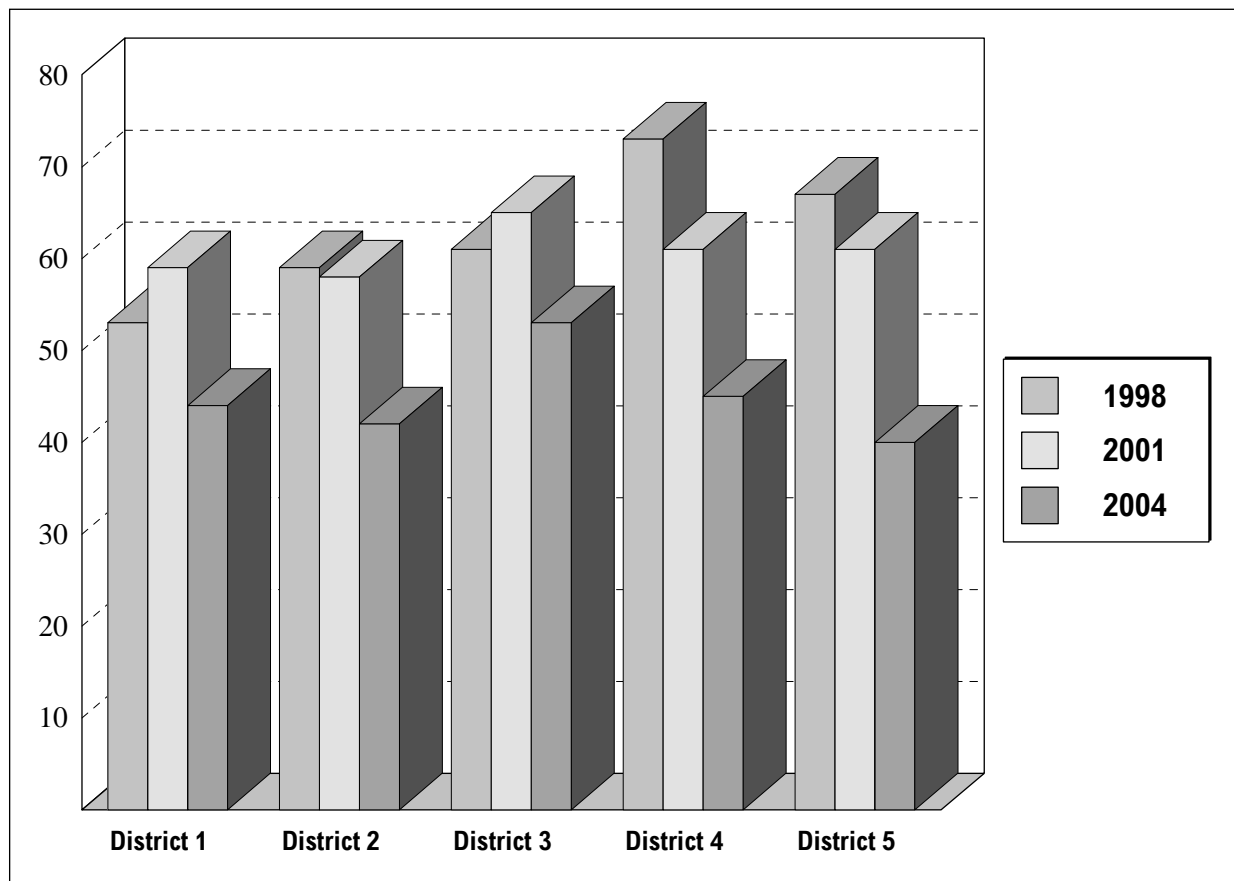
Voters assigned high ratings to school district taxes more often than inactive voters (46%-33%), but also registered more about right/low opinions (42%-37%). Regarding both city (32%-31%) and county (31%-29%) taxes, voting activity did not impact high or very high ratings. However, the higher no opinion responses with inactive voters led active voters to assign higher about right/low ratings to both city (55%-39%) and county (56%-39%) taxes. Note that in the case of voters, the taxes paid to each entity were more often rated about right/low rather than high or very high.

## **COUNCIL JOB PERFORMANCE**

Several questions each year ask survey respondents to judge the current city council, relative to overall performance as well as several general activities. The initial council-related query was, "**How would you rate the overall job performance of the current council?**" The response scale was the general four-point spectrum of excellent to poor, as well as a no opinion category. This

year's results show residents as likely to rate the overall performance good or excellent (45%) as fair or poor (42%). In terms of intense ratings, the negative (poor) opinion was twice the positive (10%-5%). The remaining 13% of the sample had no opinion when asked to respond to this question. The 45% positive rating assigned in 2004 is significantly lower than at any time -- 1998 (65%) or 2001 (62%). Several other indicators should be noted. One, the excellent rating has declined each year (9%-7%-5%) at the same time the poor rating has increased (3%-7%-10%). Second, the fair or poor rating, which increased by six percent between 1998 and 2001 (23%-29%), jumped to 42% according to this year's results. For comparison purposes, the ratio in 1998 was 2.8:1 but has fallen to 1.1:1 in 2004. In 2001, the ratio was 2.1:1.

Figure 7 compares the quality ratings by city council district in each survey year:



**Figure 7: Comparison Of Quality (Good and Excellent) Ratings Of Current City Council By Subsector -- 1998 -- 2004**

Excellent ratings have been minimal each year, with 2004 being no exception. In comparing current results to benchmark findings, District 5 (1%-7%-7%), and, to a lesser extent, District 2 (2%-9%-4%) were the only areas to assign higher excellent ratings this year compared to 1998. Diminished ratings were evident in

Districts 1 (15%-5%-7%), 3 (14%-6%-6%) and 4 (10%-6%-5%). Note that in comparing benchmark and current ratings, excellent ratings in this part of the city, although minor, are one-half of what they were in 1998. Additionally, good and excellent ratings declined in all five city council districts. The decline was greatest in Districts 4 (73%-61%-45%, -28) and 5 (67%-61%-40%, -27), where positive marks decreased by more than 25 points. Comparatively, the declines in Districts 2 (59%-58%-42%, -17), 3 (61%-65%-53%, -12) and 1 (53%-59%-44%, -9) were lower, although still at the 10 percent mark. Negative opinions of the current council performance were consistent throughout the city, ranging from 39% (District 3) up to 45% (District 1). In all three surveys, men and women have felt similarly about the city council, whether it was 1998 (63%-66%), 2001 (61%-64%), or 2004 (44%-46%). It was just that this year, both genders were significantly less likely to be positive about this group.

Nearly two in three rated the community as improved. Among this subset, 49% were positive about performance, compared to 41% who were negative. If the community was rated the same, the percentages were still more often pro rather than con (42%-38%). However, if community improvement was considered to be worse, council performance was more often negative (28%-60%) and by a significant percentage. Active voters were more negative about the current city council (47%-30%), while inactive voters generated a higher positive response (50%-44%), in addition to more often having no opinion on the issue (21%-9%). Active community members were evenly divided in their opinion of the council (45%-44%), while less active respondents were not as negative in their evaluation (45%-38%).

If the city was maintained at an excellent level, 60% were positive about the performance of the current city council. However, if city maintenance was rated good (49%-37%), the variance between the two viewpoints was more narrow. And if a fair/poor rating was assigned to city maintenance, the overall performance was more often negative (26%-63%). Renters were more positive about the council than homeowners (58%-43%), who tended to be more negative in their evaluations (46%-19%).

Parental attitudes regarding council performance (49%-48%-38%-50%) were lowest among parents of teenagers, compared to fairly consistent ratings with the other three groups. And nonparents fell between the high and low findings, with 44% positive ratings. The range of fair or poor ratings was 52% (parents of teenagers) to 35% (parents of children 6-12). The longer one lived in the community, the less positive he or she was toward council performance (51%-48%-43%) and the more negative (17%-39%-47%). Note that long-term inhabitants were the only subset to be more negative in their evaluation than positive. Middle-aged respondents were the least positive (49%-40%-47%) and most negative (35%-46%-42%) among the age subsets. For comparison

purposes, the range in 1998 was 67% (under 35 years old) to 62% (36-55 year olds).

## **SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL-RELATED ACTIVITIES**

The second council-related evaluation question focused on performance, but this time by way of evaluating a series of activities. This question has been included in both previous surveys. The question was introduced thus: "***Please tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the work the council has done in the following areas....***" Areas which were evaluated included how the council worked among themselves to promote community well-being, encouraged economic development, maintained quality of life, developed effective land use regulations, worked to keep taxes reasonable, planned for the future needs of residents, managed city funds and provided adequate forums for public input. The comment scale was very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied, in addition to the standard no opinion response.

Citywide results from all three surveys are reviewed in Table #38 below:

**TABLE #38: COMPARISON OF OVERALL SATISFACTION OR  
DISSATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL-RELATED ACTIVITIES --  
1998 -- 2004**

STATEMENT	VERY SATISFIED			SATISFIED			DISSATISFIED			VERY DISSATISFIED			NO OPINION			RATIO
	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	
Working among themselves to promote the community	12%	10%	5%	69%	68%	61%	7%	10%	16%	0%	3%	4%	12%	10%	13%	3.3:1
Encouraging economic growth	21%	14%	9%	61%	61%	58%	8%	14%	17%	1%	3%	2%	9%	8%	13%	3.5:1
Maintaining quality of life	12%	10%	7%	72%	73%	69%	7%	7%	8%	2%	1%	2%	8%	9%	14%	7.6:1
Developing effective land use regulations	5%	5%	5%	52%	58%	51%	15%	15%	15%	2%	4%	3%	26%	19%	26%	3.1:1
Working to keep taxes reasonable	6%	4%	3%	62%	60%	52%	16%	21%	22%	3%	4%	5%	14%	12%	17%	2.0:1
Planning for the future needs of residents	8%	5%	5%	64%	61%	59%	14%	18%	17%	1%	3%	1%	13%	14%	17%	3.6:1
Managing city funds	5%	4%	4%	62%	54%	48%	15%	16%	21%	1%	6%	4%	16%	21%	23%	2.1:1
Providing adequate forums for public input	6%	6%	4%	68%	66%	67%	13%	14%	12%	2%	4%	3%	11%	11%	14%	4.7:1

Maintaining quality of life (76%-10%, 7.6:1) and providing adequate forums for public input (71%-15%, 4.7:1) were the council-related activities in which residents voiced the highest level of satisfaction to dissatisfaction. Overall, each activity received a satisfaction rating at least twice the dissatisfaction level. These findings would appear to conflict with the previous question, in which 45% rated the performance of the current council excellent or good and 42% fair or poor. It would appear that residents rate overall performance differently than they grade these particular activities. Four other activities achieved a ratio of better than three to one: planning for the future needs of residents (64%-18%, 3.6:1), encouraging economic growth (67%-19%, 3.5:1), working among themselves to promote the community (66%-20%, 3.3:1), and developing effective land use regulations (56%-18%, 3.1:1). The remaining two items scored a satisfaction ratio of 2.1:1 (52%-25% for managing city funds) and 2.0:1 (55%-27% for working to keep taxes reasonable)

There was very little enthusiasm among residents in the form of intense satisfaction with any of the described activities, although with a few exceptions,

this result is similar to previous findings. Very satisfied responses were no higher than 9% (encouraging economic growth) and 7% (maintaining quality of life) and got as low as 3% (working to keep taxes reasonable). Three actions attained a dissatisfied response of more than 20%: working to keep taxes reasonable (27%), managing city funds (25%), and working among themselves to promote the community (20%). This year's survey also showed a high percentage of no opinion responses, from a low of 13% (working among themselves to promote the community and encouraging economic growth) upwards to 23% (managing city funds) and 26% (developing effective land use regulations).

In terms of trending from the benchmark results, each item rated lower in 2004. Percentage differences ranged from one percent upward to 15%. The drop in satisfaction was greatest for three activities: working among themselves to promote the community (81%-78%-66%), encouraging economic growth (82%-75%-67%), and managing city funds (67%-58%-52%). The two items in which dissatisfaction varied the least over the past six years were developing effective land use regulations (57%-63%-56%) and providing adequate forums for public input (74%-72%-71%). The variances with the other activities were 12% (84%-83%-76% for maintaining quality of life), 13% (68%-64%-55% for working to keep taxes reasonable), and 8% (72%-66%-64% for planning for the future needs of residents). In addition to diminished general satisfaction, several endured drops in intense ratings. The three that incurred diminished ratings of at least three percent were the activities working among themselves to promote the community (12%-10%-5%), encouraging economic growth (21%-14%-9%), and maintaining quality of life (12%-10%-7%). The others were less than 8% in 1998, compared to less than 5% in 2004, with variances of no more than three percent. Therefore, people are less satisfied with council activities and the three activities listed above lost a significant degree of passion.

Another method for evaluating trending is through the analysis of the satisfaction ratio. In this case, the comparison continues to show residents to be less positive. For example, the statement working among themselves to promote the community saw its ratio of 11.6:1 in 1998 drop to 3.3:1 this year. Another significant drop-off was for encouraging economic growth, which went from 9.1:1 down to 3.5:1. Additional declines were noted for working to keep taxes reasonable (3.6:1-2.0:1), planning for the future needs of residents (4.8:1-3.6:1), and managing city funds (4.2:1-2.1:1). Two items showed a very minimal decline: developing effective land use regulations (3.4:1-3.1:1) and providing adequate forums for public input (4.9:1-4.7:1).

Although still positive in general about the city council activities, residents are clearly less satisfied with several. Table #39 compares the satisfaction ratings



from the previous surveys to current results in each council district, to denote any variations:

**TABLE #39: COMPARISON OF OVERALL SATISFACTION RATINGS WITH COUNCIL-RELATED ACTIVITIES BY SUBSECTOR -- 1998 -- 2004**

STATEMENT	DISTRICT 1			DISTRICT 2			DISTRICT 3			DISTRICT 4			DISTRICT 5		
	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004	1998	2001	2004
Working among themselves to promote the community	87%	86%	73%	74%	82%	62%	85%	75%	78%	79%	76%	60%	79%	71%	61%
Encouraging economic growth	90%	78%	76%	78%	79%	73%	85%	74%	72%	79%	74%	62%	77%	73%	59%
Maintaining quality of life	83%	92%	75%	76%	82%	80%	90%	80%	81%	86%	86%	76%	79%	75%	69%
Developing effective land use regulations	52%	80%	60%	48%	75%	64%	68%	48%	55%	56%	60%	56%	49%	58%	52%
Working to keep taxes reasonable	61%	66%	54%	61%	62%	52%	80%	60%	57%	61%	69%	59%	75%	59%	52%
Planning for the future needs of residents	72%	65%	73%	65%	75%	65%	79%	66%	70%	71%	63%	57%	70%	60%	61%
Managing city funds	67%	66%	52%	51%	61%	51%	77%	49%	58%	67%	60%	53%	70%	54%	44%
Providing adequate forums for public input	70%	70%	74%	70%	68%	74%	79%	70%	71%	69%	74%	69%	81%	73%	66%

Districts 1 and 3 appeared to be most satisfied in terms of current ratings, as five items achieved satisfaction ratings of 70% or better. That compared to three in District 2, one in District 4, and zero in District 5. Everywhere but in District 5, 70% of respondents were satisfied with how the council was maintaining quality of life (75%-80%-81%-76%-69%), with the remaining percentage one point short. And reaching the 70% plateau in three of the five districts were encouraging economic growth (76%-73%-72%-62%-59%), and providing adequate forums for public input (74%-74%-71%-69%-66%).

The number one ranked item in all but District 1 was maintaining quality of life, which ranked second there, as they were more satisfied with the council's encouraging economic growth. Respondents were not as pleased with that item as people in District 1, as it ranked between third (Districts 2, 3, and 4) and fifth (District 5). The second ranked item in Districts 2, 4, and 5 was providing adequate forums for public input, compared to working among themselves to promote the community in District 3, and maintaining quality of life in District 1. The fourth rated item was different throughout the city. In Districts 1 and 4, it was working among themselves to promote the community. That compared to

planning for the future needs of residents in Districts 2 and 5, and providing adequate forums for public input in District 3.

Several statements were looked upon differently. In terms of the satisfaction variance, greater than ten points separated the high and low score for the following statements: working among themselves to promote the community (78% in District 3, to 60% in District 4), encouraging economic growth (76% in District 1, to 59% in District 5), maintaining quality of life (81% in District 3, to 69% in District 5), developing effective land use regulations (64% in District 2, to 52% in District 5), planning for the future needs of residents (73% in District 1, to 57% in District 4), and managing city funds (58% in District 3, to 44% in District 5).

A second evaluation compares the items as ranked by satisfaction ratings. Variances of more than two positions included working among themselves to promote the community (2nd in District 3, to 6th in District 2), encouraging economic growth (1st in District 1, to 5th in District 5), and developing effective land use regulations (5th in District 2, to 8th in District 3). Several other items varied by two positional places. Only one item varied by one position or less and that was relative to maintaining quality of life, which as stated previously ranked first or second throughout the city.

Although the overall results show residents less satisfied with council activities when compared to benchmark results, the table shows that not everyone was less satisfied than before. For example, District 2 showed as much improvement in terms of gains as it did declines (3-3). District 1 was more negative than positive in its evaluations (3-5), but three were still rated higher than before. However, in Districts 3 (0-8), 4 (0-6), and 5 (1-7), the trend was to be more negative than positive.

As noted, Districts 1 and 2 were the areas in which most of the satisfaction ratings improved. In District 1, the improvements were developing effective land uses (52%-80%-60%), although there was a large drop when compared to the second survey, along with providing adequate forums for public input (70%-70%-74%) and one other item in which satisfaction increased by just one point. The actions in which respondents in District 2 were more positive this year were maintaining quality of life (76%-82%-80%), developing effective land use regulations (48%-75%-64%), even though the second survey results are higher, and providing adequate forums for public input (70%-68%-74%).

Districts other than 1 or 2 were the areas in which satisfaction declined most. Respondents from District 3 were less satisfied with the council working among themselves to promote the community (85%-75%-78%), encouraging economic growth (85%-74%-72%), maintaining quality of life (90%-80%-81%), developing effective land use regulations (68%-48%-55%), working to keep taxes reasonable

(80%-60%-57%), planning for the future needs of residents (79%-66%-70%), managing city funds (77%-49%-58%), and providing adequate forums for public input (79%-70%-71%). Note that only the economic growth and reasonable tax statements showed gradual decline.

The six statements in District 4 in which ratings declined were working among themselves to promote the community (79%-76%-60%), encouraging economic growth (79%-74%-62%), maintaining quality of life (86%-86%-76%), planning for the future needs of residents (71%-65%-57%), and managing city funds (67%-60%-53%). In most instances, the decline in satisfaction was more gradual than an attitudinal spike. And in District 5, the following activities were looked at more negatively: working among themselves to promote the community (79%-71%-61%), encouraging economic growth (77%-73%-59%), maintaining quality of life (79%-75%-69%), working to keep taxes reasonable (75%-59%-52%), planning for the future needs of residents (70%-60%-61%), managing city funds (70%-54%-44%), and providing adequate forums for public input (81%-73%-66%).

Although Districts 1 and 2 had several statements in which satisfaction improved, they were not without their declines. In District 1, the criteria with falling ratings were working among themselves to promote the community (87%-86%-73%), encouraging economic growth (90%-78%-76%), maintaining quality of life (83%-92%-75%), working to keep taxes reasonable (61%-66%-54%), and managing city funds (67%-66%-52%). Comparatively, the three that declined in District 2 were working among themselves to promote the community (74%-82%-62%), encouraging economic growth (78%-79%-73%), and working to keep taxes reasonable (61%-62%-52%).

Note that residents throughout the city were less satisfied this year with several action statements, including working among themselves to promote the community, encouraging economic growth, and working to keep taxes reasonable. In addition, four of five subsectors were less satisfied with the council's maintaining quality of life (all but District 2) and managing city funds (all but District 2).

To identify areas of concern among those both involved or uninvolved in civic affairs and the electoral process, Table #40 lists those satisfaction and dissatisfaction percentages:

**TABLE #40: SATISFACTION OR DISSATISFACTION WITH  
COUNCIL-RELATED ACTIVITIES BY COMMUNITY ACTIVITY AND VOTING  
ACTIVITY**

STATEMENT	COMMUNITY ACTIVITY				VOTING ACTIVITY			
	ACTIVE/INFORMED		ISSUES/LIVE HERE		ALWAYS/OFTEN		SELDOM/NEVER	
	SATIS	DISSAT	SATIS	DISSAT	SATIS	DISSAT	SATIS	DISSAT
Working among themselves to promote the community	70%	21%	59%	20%	66%	25%	68%	10%
Encouraging economic growth	71%	20%	63%	18%	67%	23%	68%	11%
Maintaining quality of life	79%	11%	72%	10%	78%	10%	72%	8%
Developing effective land use regulations	61%	18%	51%	17%	56%	22%	58%	8%
Working to keep taxes reasonable	56%	31%	55%	23%	56%	31%	53%	21%
Planning for the future needs of residents	66%	21%	62%	17%	63%	23%	69%	10%
Managing city funds	55%	26%	46%	24%	52%	28%	52%	18%
Providing adequate forums for public input	74%	15%	67%	14%	72%	17%	68%	10%

Respondents who rated themselves active in the community this year tended to be more satisfied with the city council activities than less active individuals. This was true relative to working among themselves to promote the community (70%-59%), encouraging economic growth (71%-63%), maintaining quality of life (79%-72%), developing effective land uses (61%-51%), planning for the future needs of residents (66%-62%), managing city funds (55%-46%), and providing adequate forums for public input (74%-67%). Note that although inactive respondents were less satisfied, dissatisfaction was not higher as this group was more apt to have no opinion regarding these activities. In fact, the only two actions in which dissatisfaction varied by more than three percent showed active respondents to be more negative -- 31%-23% for working to keep taxes reasonable and 21%-17% for planning for the future needs of residents.

Findings were different when comparing attitudes based on voting activities. With community activity, it was the dissatisfaction ratings that showed little difference, whereas with active and inactive voters, it was dissatisfaction that varied, with voters being the more negative. For example, in terms of higher satisfaction, active voters were more positive about the council's maintaining quality of life (78%-72%) and providing adequate forums for public input (72%-68%), with inactive voters more satisfied with planning for the future needs of residents (69%-63%). However, people who voted were more likely than inactive voters to be dissatisfied, including working among themselves to promote the community (25%-10%), encouraging economic growth (23%-11%), developing effective land use regulations (22%-8%), working to keep taxes reasonable (31%-21%), planning for future needs of residents (23%-10%),

managing city funds (28%-18%), and providing adequate forums for public input (17%-10%).

## ***MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE TO ADDRESS***

The final question in this section of the report was a type of issue prioritization question, with the responses pre-determined. It was presented immediately after the city council performance questions, although the question did not specifically focus on the council. This question and its issue responses have been identical for all three surveys. A list of six statements was read, preceded by the question, "***Please tell me which one is the most important for Bryan to work on during the next year?***" The issues, taken from the two previous surveys, were keeping taxes from increasing, maintaining emphasis on public safety, encouraging economic development, improving city services, being more responsive to citizens and improving the quality of streets. Residents could select one response. This year, survey participants prioritized the most important issue as keep taxes from increasing (30%), followed by encouraging economic development (21%) and improve quality of streets (20%). Also of importance was the issue maintain emphasis on public safety (17%). Issues of minimal importance, based on the findings, were be more responsive to citizens (8%) and improve city services (4%).

Keeping taxes from increasing regained its position as the most important issue for the city to work on, overtaking street improvements, which was the top-ranked response in 2001. When comparing current and previous results, the one that has increased in importance each time has been encouraging economic development (17%-18%-21%). In addition, keeping taxes from increasing (26%-21%-30%) was higher than the two previous surveys, although the increase was not gradual. Two issues that were less important today than when first introduced in 1998 were quality of streets (22%-32%-20%) and maintaining emphasis on public safety (25%-16%-17%). The two least mentioned issues, being more responsive to citizens (8%-10%-8%) and improving city services (2%-4%-4%), have at no time generated a significant level of interest from residents.

Keeping taxes from increasing was identified as the most important issue in four of the five city council districts. That included District 3 (39%), the subsector most apt to generate this response, as well as Districts 1 (37%), 2 (36%), and 4 (26%). In District 5, keeping taxes from increasing (19%) was only fourth on the priority listing, behind encouraging economic development (30%), maintain emphasis on public safety (21%), and improve quality of streets (20%). Improving quality of streets (29%) and maintaining emphasis on public safety ranked second and third in District 1, while these two issues flip-flopped in terms of prioritization in

District 2, with scores of 21% and 15%. Encouraging economic development (24%) was the second most important issue to residents in District 3, followed by improving quality of streets (15%). As in Districts 1 and 2, these two issues (economic development and streets) ranked third and second in District 4. Additionally, maintaining quality of streets ranked fourth in both Districts 3 and 4.

Note that variances abounded throughout the city relative to the percentages assigned to the different issues. They were evident relative to the issues of keeping taxes from increasing (39% in District 3, to 19% in District 5), maintaining emphasis on public safety (21% in Districts 2 and 5, to 11% in District 3), encouraging economic development (30% in District 5, to 10% in District 1), and improving quality of streets (29% in District 1, to 15% in Districts 2 and 3). Note that the differences were greatest regarding increased taxes and economic development, as 20 points separated the low and high scores.

Women more often prioritized the issues of keeping taxes from increasing (33%-28%) and maintaining emphasis on public safety (20%-14%), while men concentrated their attention on encouraging economic development (25%-17%). Both groups focused similar attention on improving quality of streets (21%-18%).

Keeping taxes from increasing received one-half of the responses of people who rated community improvement worse (30%-26%-50%), but it was the top issue among all three subsets. It was respondents who rated the community improved who focused on the issue of encouraging economic development (23%-20%-6%). A belief that the community was the same led respondents to prioritize improving quality of streets (18%-25%-19%) more than others. Active voters prioritized keeping taxes from increasing (27%), encourage economic development (24%), and improve quality of streets (21%). Comparatively, inactive voters placed a greater emphasis on keeping taxes from increasing (38%), but then ranked as second and third maintaining emphasis on public safety (20%) and improving quality of streets (16%) and not concentrating much attention on economic development (13%). Both active and inactive community members assigned similar percentages to keeping taxes from increasing (30%-31%) and maintaining emphasis on public safety (17%-17%). The difference was that people more active in their community placed a higher emphasis on encouraging economic development (23%-17%), while inactive members listed improving quality of streets (23%-18%) as most important.

When a person ranked the performance of the council positively or negatively, they ranked issues similarly: keep taxes from increasing (32%-29%), maintain emphasis on public safety (15%-16%), and encourage economic development (21%-23%). The only issue of difference was that people positive about the council were more apt to mention improve quality of streets (23%-16%).

Individuals with no opinion about the council prioritized taxes from increasing as their number one issue, but then focused more attention on maintaining emphasis on public safety (27%). Additionally, how one rated the manner in which the city was maintained did not impact how he or she prioritized issues, as all three similarly said keep taxes from increasing (30%-30%-31%), maintain emphasis on public safety (17%-16%-17%), encourage economic development (19%-23%-18%), and improve quality of streets (19%-21%-17%) were all of similar importance. Homeowners were more interested in keeping taxes from increasing (31%-26%), while renters put more emphasis on public safety (23%-15%). Both similarly prioritized encouraging economic development (21%-20%) and improving quality of streets (20%-18%).

Nonparents assigned identical percentages of 26% to keep taxes from increasing and encourage economic development, with improving quality of streets third with 23%. Parents were more intent on identifying keeping taxes from increasing (37%-38%-36%-41%) as the most important issue. The second through fourth rated issues were of similar interest: maintain emphasis on public safety (18%-19%-14%-15%), encourage economic development (15%-15%-19%-15%), and improve quality of streets (17%-18%-17%-17%). The only item in which tenure in the community was impacted appeared to be keep taxes from increasing (24%-24%-33%), as it was more likely to be mentioned by long-term residents. Similar interest was placed on maintaining emphasis on public safety (21%-22%-15%), encouraging economic development (22%-18%-21%), and improving quality of streets (22%-21%-19%). The age tabulations showed the issue of keeping taxes from increasing to be of less importance to younger respondents (23%-35%-31%), who were as likely to talk about taxes as they were maintaining the emphasis on public safety (23%-16%-14%), an issue of secondary importance to older individuals. All three subsets similarly prioritized encouraging economic development (19%-21%-22%) and improve quality of streets (20%-18%-21%).

A follow-up question was asked in which residents were asked to prioritize the second most important issue. Far and away, respondents prioritized improving the quality of streets (31%). Other issues were keeping taxes from increasing (19%), encouraging economic development (16%), and maintaining emphasis on public safety (15%).